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ABSTRACT

After reviewing some of the problems involved in a traditional approach to teaching, this paper introduces a teaching system based on a patterned approach to the public relations writing process. The system format which is presented involves an analysis of persuasive communication components, programmed questioning of traditional premises, and planning purposeful communication according to a ten-question framework that includes the following areas: objectives, audiences and reasons for writing, audience characteristics, audience objectives, media or channels and reasons for selection, media or channels criteria, sources and questions, communication strategies, essence of message, and nonverbal support. The paper discusses problems that might confront teachers in preparing students for change, suggests objectives for the development of professionals, and outlines concrete activities and assignments for use in the classroom. A nine-page student handout that explains the analytical system is included. (MAI)

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Public Relations Division

A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH TO PR WRITING

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

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CS204 340

PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE PR WRITING TEACHER

Plenty of in-class and homework writing assignments, text readings, and tips-and-tactics handouts and discussions, laced with guest appearances by journalists and PR professionals, have proved popular with generations of students who were trained to do journalistically passable press releases on tightly structured assignments.

Alas, this seemingly traditional approach to the teaching of publicity and general PR writing classes may be of limited value in short-range preparation of students for "real world" needs, problems, and contingencies and of questionable value in giving them the foundation for lifelong personal development as creative and effective communicators for clients.

Moreover, the fleeting transience of lessons learned in the equivalent of less than three weeks of on-the-job time (average classroom and homework hours total for a three-unit course) appear to interact with student limitations and traditional homework and classroom approaches in such a way as to allow for minimal internalization of conceptual and analytical bases for professional PR writing.

The following review of some of the problems confronting PR writing teachers today may help place in perspective the discussions of objectives, 1-10 system, and teaching methods:

--Ascendancy in the post-World War II era of chief executives and management teams oriented to management by objectives (MBO). In recent years, MBO has impacted increasingly upon public relations management. It may be projected that this trend,

together with attrition of publicity-for-the-sake-of-publicity managers, will professionally cripple graduates in obtaining and retaining jobs if they cannot operationalize objectives-oriented PR writing. As persuasion scholars might point out, conversion of attitudes and behavioral patterns in PR writing would tend to be far more formidable to attain than the early shaping and slighter shifts possible in a student's first PR writing course.

--Limited retention of theoretical concepts unless a student is able to explicate and operationalize them.

--Pressures of teaching a skills course covering a diversity of forms of writing, types of clients, news media, and other channels of communication, publics, and purposes.

--Limited units of coursework in writing in programs that adhere to AEJ guidelines restricting the communications department work a PR major may take. Unlike earlier generations, today's student may not meet all the requirements for majors and still take separate courses in advanced newswriting, copyediting, telecommunications writing, critical writing, and the like.

--Strong print media orientation, particularly newspaper, of many pre-requisite writing courses and of generations of PR officers who will provide new graduates their on-the-job training with their own schooling and newspaper experience as models. Yet, the graduates will be charged with communicating in an increasingly audio-visual society.

--Orientation of the schools that educate them and the PR officers who supervise them not only to print media, but also to

mass communications to the exclusion of any systemic relations to interpersonal communications. This means that today's graduate may be ill equipped to propose and prepare critical one-to-one and small group communication, even in preparing correspondence to higher management.

--Inadequate preparation of a number of students by earlier schooling for command of the basic tools of writing and lack of internalization of incoming PR writing students of basic copyediting and proofing.

--Dependence of students (as many of their seniors in journalism and public relations) on handout and dictated information and little skill or inclination for verification, challenge, interpretation, and development of facts and quotes that may be needed for effective PR writing.

--Rapidly changing media, styles of communication, and media behavioral patterns of publics. Racing obsolescence of techniques and technologies. Outmoding of long-accepted theories of communication. Attitudinal shifts of American publics to business, government, and institutions. Increasing sophistication of many publics. These and other factors make standard do and don't rules of PR writing, tried and true tips and tactics, and teaching in current techniques of limited temporal value to students.

--Inability of many students at undergraduate level to turn to literature in public relations, let alone other fields of communication and the social sciences, to adapt, extend, contrast, synthesize, and otherwise seize upon theory and research for

pragmatic applications to the planning and execution of PR writing.

--Expectations by some students that public relations writing is merely an extension of journalistic writing or the stringing together of cue words or slogans.

--Lack of depth and breadth in any one individual (let alone in classroom and homework time available) to master the teaching of all the types of publicity writing, not to mention the many other types of writing in which PR persons may need to become involved.

--The schizophrenic nature of the demands upon a single PR writer who may have to ghostwrite statements for several persons; write in one style for TV, another for papers, another for magazines, another for brochures, another for house organs, another for correspondence, another for scripts, another for memos to executives, etc.; write to the interests and level of understanding of a variety of publics; and even target messages for the widely differing sections and personnel of the same organ of a medium.

SOME OBJECTIVES FOR THE PR WRITING TEACHER

With such challenges in mind, the author abandoned the more traditional objectives specifying only the teaching of techniques and entry-level skills and developed the following set of ends:

--Develop habit patterns across the spectra of PR writing for operationalization of analyzing, questioning, planning, critically examining, and polishing as stages of the writing process.

--Provide students with a patterned approach for systematic and systemic steps they may find helpful in thinking out, researching, and executing PR writing involving numerous and complex variables, even in situations in which they have no experience.

--Contribute to development of objectives orientation in everything a person does as a PR writer through familiarization with the variability of objectives of different programs of employers for varying publics, media, and circumstances.

--Teach students to target and tailor communications for different types of interpersonal and mass media and for publics with sensitivity to the criteria and needs of the media and the frameworks of reference and objectives of the audiences.

--Help prepare students for changes in approaches, techniques, employers, media, publics, and other factors by introducing them to the use of journals in and out of PR for abstracting pragmatic intelligence to arm them for effective PR writing. (This may involve separate abstracting assignments, as well as stress upon journals as resources in answering 1-10 system questions.)

--Give students the latitude of making their own reasoned selections within the 1-10 system to instill creativity and initiative and to familiarize themselves with the exercise of intellectual wrestling. By the same token, require the exercise of providing their own why or why not on media, audiences, messages, and other parameters suggested or assigned by the teacher so they may be inoculated against unthinking following of orders.

--Assist students in their preparation to cope with the

realities of communications in crises, under pressure, and with problems generated by employers who may not have their sense of ethics.

--Aid students in sharpening self-criticism of their writing strengths and weaknesses (through in-person and written feedback, display and discussion of papers, criticism of outside examples, and, most of all, by measuring their writing exercises against the yardsticks they, themselves, create in their 1-10 analyses).

--Instill in students the patterned behavior of thinking in terms of visual and verbal components in planning messages they wish to convey in an audio-visual, electronic culture.

--Teach students to analyze media and their criteria and needs by providing analytical exercises from the perspectives of clients of their choice and giving them a template for stimulation of story ideas, as well as on-going study of media of importance to future employers.

--Help students master necessary entry-level skills and understand how to turn to professional organizations, literature, and continuing education to fill in holes in their education.

--Help students internalize the need for outlining and polishing copy by requiring submission of outlines and any drafts.

--Safeguard budding student creativity (by raising questions rather than making critical comment when something on a paper borders on conventions, by encouraging students to challenge teacher criticism with logic, and by offering students worried

about "far out" writing the option of submitting two variations of all or any portion of an assignment and receiving the highest grade of the two).

--Coach them on how to get maximum creative output for time invested in assignments. This last objective may be one of the most critical in helping the 1-10 system work and in getting student cooperation on other objectives without burning them out, causing them to suffer in other classes, or dropping out. (Such coaching may start with tips such as those included at the end of the 1-10 system handout for students.)

THE NUCLEUS OF THE 1-10 SYSTEM FOR PR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

The following color insert, which is handed out to students on the first day of class, serves as the nucleus upon which lectures, discussions, readings, individual feedback, in-person consultations, and, above all, the thinking and growth of the students build the foundations for attainment of the author's--and their own--objectives for their effectiveness and creativity as PR writers:

To: My PR Writing Students

From: Prof. Nager

Subj: Your 1-10 Analytical System Key for

A Professional Approach to PR Writing

To help you develop a professional approach to public relations writing and attain the objectives we have for this course, you and I will go through a special analytical exercise on assignments.

Unless I specifically ask you to do otherwise, you'll turn in typewritten answers to each of my 10 questions on every writing assignment. Please note that you'll do your 1-10 analysis **before** writing the first word of a press release, script, speech, memo, or other written communications.

This memo only gives you the nucleus of the 1-10 system and the protocol you'll follow from analysis through presentation of polished final draft copy. You and I will build upon that nucleus throughout the term and you'll learn how to continue building upon it long after you graduate.

As one former student wrote to me: "The assignments really make your mind stretch and your brain hurt, but you really learn something." As your own mind stretches, please add to the instructions in this memo. You'll gain new insights from class discussion, my personal feedback to you, your readings, and your experience in working with the system.

Please review the points in this memo and the notes you'll add to it on <u>each assignment</u>, from the first through the final exam.

THE ASSIGNMENT PACKAGE

The parts of writing assignments, as you'll assemble them from top to bottom, will include your 1-10 analysis, your outline of written material based upon your 1-10 analysis, your rough drafts, and carefully copyedited and proofed final draft copy that measures up to your own 1-10 analytical yardstick.

BASIC FORMAT FOR 1-10 ANALYSIS

For purposes of building a patterned approach that will serve you in the years ahead and our mutual convenience in reviewing your answers, I'm asking you to type your answers in

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the following format and with the following headings:

To: Myself and Prof. Nager

From: (Your Name and Student ID #)

Subj: (Slug) Assignment Analysis

Date: (Submitted)

1. Objectives:

2. Audiences and Why:

3. Audience Characteristics:

4. Audience Objectives:

5. Media or Channels and Why:

6. Media Criteria:

7. Sources and Questions:

8. Communication Strategies:

9. Essence of Message:

10. Non-verbal Support:

Please triple space your memo and use standard margins. Edit and proof it carefully and use standard copyediting symbols as needed.

Although you'll follow format in using the above headings in the order given, it's very important for you to understand that your answers will be interdependent. As an individual writer, you may prefer to focus on several questions at the same time and/or in another sequence. That's great. Some students find it very helpful to rough out answers on separate sheets of paper or index cards for each question. Then, as ideas come and spark others, they easily shift from question to question and back again. Then they review, select, and organize their ideas for each 1-10 question before writing the memo to themselves and me.

Once you've thought out and typed up at least one draft of your memo, you're ready to outline and then tackle the actual writing assignment. (You also may think of new ideas for your analysis while outlining or writing. That's fine. Incorporate them.)

I require answers to my 10 questions but I will be happy

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to review any sections you may wish to add to the analyses. Some students, for instance, like to preface their 1-10 analyses with background sections briefly reviewing their understanding of the assignment and the situational variables they perceive to make it clear to themselves and me, as a surrogate client, what they're tackling.

NUCLEI OF 10 QUESTIONS

1. Objectives: What are my client/employer objectives that I wish to support with this specific writing project? Please list in order of importance. Aim for "hard"--realistic, measurable, attainable within a reasonable time frame--objectives. Concentrate on behavioral objectives, that is, what behavior you could expect from key publics if your message is effective. Keep in mind that you may have internal objectives (such as influence of employee behavior) as well as external ones. Remember that objectives will relate to organizational goals. Note that your objective statements will not tell what you're writing or how you're writing a message, but why: Why are we doing this? One way to approach development of writing objectives is to focus upon problems, needs, or opportunities that may confront the client. Then ask what behavior of key publics is needed. Think of objectives as the end results sought. These ends relate to influencing behavior or pre-disposition to behavior of readers, listeners, or viewers in the best interests of your client and publics. Writing a speech, getting a press release in the media, or even winning a commendation from the boss are only means to ends, not the end results sought.

2. Audiences and Why: Who do I need to reach with my message and why do I need to reach them? Please be as precise as you can in defining publics or sub-publics. For instance, the release you write for the Times might be aimed at IBM stockholders, potential IBM stockholders, and brokers, rather than readers of the Times. The "why" you will spell out for each audience should relate to one or more of your objectives. Briefly explain. Please list publics in order of importance for the particular objectives you've designated.

3. Audience Characteristics: As reviewed in class, what are the frameworks of reference for each of my key audiences? Note that characteristics may be demographic, related to their behavioral patterns, and pertain to attitudes and psychological variables. Here, you're trying to develop a relevant portrait of your audiences to keep in mind in selecting media for them, designing strategy and essence of message, tailoring concepts and language to their levels of understanding and interests, and answering other questions in your 1-10 analysis.

4. Audience Objectives: What might the audiences I've selected want from my client and look for in my message if they are to be influenced, or open to influencing, along the lines

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I've specified in my objectives statements in #1? Please note that audience objectives follow from the characteristics of the members of your selected publics.

5. Media or Channels and Why: What specific media or channels of communication will prove most advantageous in reaching and influencing the audiences I've selected? Make sure you spell out why you select each. Please present your choices and reasons in order of importance. Your reasons should relate to your answers to above questions about objectives and audiences. You also should keep in mind peculiarities, strengths or advantages, weaknesses or disadvantages, and requirements of the media of your choice. You may target to named organs or classes of print and electronic media. You also may select from correspondence, brochures, audio-visual presentations, speeches, and even one-to-one oral (for which you'd draft suggested remarks). After you have received instruction, your professor will ask you to expand your answer to #5 to include information on specified media, such as names of publications and stations and titles and names of persons or desks to which materials would be targeted.

6. Media or Channels Criteria: How will what I write fill the objectives, satisfy the needs, fit into the format or style, and meet requirements for use of the specific media or channels I've selected? What do I have to keep in mind to earn selection of my materials by media gatekeepers and/or to make the most effective utilization possible of selected channels of communication? Remember that the criteria of editors and writers for the same publication, for instance, may vary widely.

7. Sources and Questions: What more do I need to know and where and/or from whom will I get the information? Please phrase questions exactly as you would ask them in on-the-job situations. Please be as precise as you can in specifying sources for each question you ask. Sources may be internal (files, organizational officers, specialists, and the like) or external (directories, reference works, professional organizations, colleagues in the field, other companies, research data banks, journal articles). Sources may include persons identified in assignments or others you may suggest by responsibility ("person in charge of . . .") Questions may be asked to verify, interpret, expand upon, challenge, clear up, or complete given information for content. Questions may be asked to develop quote and ghost attribution materials. And questions may be raised to help you with the subject matter covered in the rest of this analysis.

8. Communication Strategies: How will what I write be designed to be most effective in supporting my client's objectives with the particular audiences I'm trying to influence through the media I'm using? Keep in mind variables you've spelled out in answering questions about audience characteristics, audience objectives, and media criteria. Some questions you may wish to ponder in planning strategies include: What are the positive aspects of the situation? Obstacles to overcome with

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my key publics? Obstacles to overcome with the media? What's significant, special, unique? Strengths or strong points to emphasize for my client? Weaknesses or weak points to take into consideration? Needs to educate or interpret? What and how should I anticipate and prevent in the way of negative interpretations, unfavorable effects, exposure of information to untargeted audiences, holes in logic, questionability of actions or information presented to me, or other potential problems? How can I plan the message to fit with other current and past PR communications? Timing? Relation to other situations impacting upon media or publics? Contingency measures? What should I emphasize, how, and why? What may I do to pre-test or monitor effectiveness of the communications I plan? Please briefly explain what you consider to be your most important strategies in this particular situation.

9. Essence of Message: What's the "guts" or "bottom line" of what I'm trying to get across to my audience? If I'm most effective, what concept should be clear in the minds of these persons? What's the major point or points I want them to process, understand, remember, or relate? Please be concise and limit yourself to several typewritten lines.

10. Non-verbal Support: Please briefly describe any visual or other sensory elements that would enhance your message by complementing verbal content and while meeting criteria of media or channels selected. In the case of releases to print media, for instance, describe proposed photos or illustrations in enough detail for a photographer or artist to be able to picture what you want. Suggest visual aids you'd provide for a speaker. Describe the action, background, and/or personalities you'd make available for a TV or movie crew. Suggest voice, music, sound effects, or other audio support when working on audio or audio-visual assignments. Suggest even texture or feel of special brochures if you wish.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Once you've developed your 1-10 analysis and reviewed it as a whole, as well as on the basis of its component parts, you will use it as a guide in developing your content outline and drafting the communication planned.

At this stage, you will want to review your creative written product against the guidelines you, yourself, created in your 1-10 analysis. Ask yourself: Does my assignment meet my objectives? Does it follow the strategies I outlined? How well is it aimed at and tailored for the audiences I selected? Does it take into consideration their objectives and characteristics? Was it prepared to meet the criteria of the media or channels? Does the essence of what I wish to convey come through? Do verbal and non-verbal communication combine effectively?

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When you've done your best to bring your writing assignment into harmony with your 1-10 analysis, give it the polish of a professional who edits her or his own copy for readability and smooth flow and then double and triple checks grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style.

SOME GENERAL TIPS

--Quality of analysis, not quantity of verbiage, will impress me and the executives who hire and promote professional PR talent.

--It is the end product, not how many hours or pints of blood, sweat, and tears, that counts. The effective writer strives to use her or his limited time to advantage and plans before hitting the typewriter.

--Brevity in writing analytical memos is as prized as concise writing is for the media. For our purposes in this class, you may use outline style or expository writing in answering the 10 questions. Just be consistent on each assignment.

--Rather than repeating information from section to section of your 1-10 analysis, you may wish to letter objectives, audiences, media, sources, and the like and when the need arises to refer back, just cite your letter designation, for instance, "see objective c." Any system you can make clear to both of us and that can save you time will be great.

--A fresh, alert writer who has had a good night's sleep runs circles around colleagues who need to force tired minds to focus. He or she who waits until the night before an assignment is due not only may end up burning the midnight oil and producing low quality work at a snail's pace, but also may be creating a vicious cycle of running to catch up. Allow several hours of fresh, rested thoughtfulness for each assignment.

--An up-tight or spaced-out writer fools only herself or himself by using excessive amounts of caffeine or nicotine or any other drugs to help one write. They may give a writer an illusion of helping but tend to cause quality of analysis and writing to suffer. When facing a "cold" typewriter, anxiety, preoccupation, or drowsiness, many professionals find it helpful to get up, stretch, engage in light exercise, take a rest break, and/or work on other projects.

--Type rough drafts. Students who do, learn that although it may take longer to get the hang of thinking at the typewriter at the start of the term, by mid-term, they're spending an hour or so less on analyses and messages than their counterparts who still scribble notes and drafts.

--When thoughts come to mind, hit the typewriter keyboard and don't stop to check spelling, vocabulary choice, grammar, or typos while the creative juices flow. You'll not only get down thoughts that might be lost, but also save precious time. Most persons who play with the false economy of trying to peck out a single draft that will not need rewrite nor editing, wind up spending hours more than colleagues who rough out what they want to say and plan on revising it later. They also tend to wind up with artificial-sounding syntax and lack the smooth flow needed to hold and guide reader or listener attention.

--Organize your notes to save time, assure you forget nothing, and be able to write cohesively. Take notes on one side of the page, use headings or key words or symbols, and use one of a number of outlining schemes before sitting down to write from your notes.

--Mark up handout or printed materials. Underline, highlight, or code information. Jot notes and questions in the margins or on another sheet of paper. Above all, remember that handout information in the "real world" may be incomplete or inaccurate and the professional PR writer has the responsibility to ask questions. For purposes of initial assignments in this class, you'll write your questions in #7 of the 1-10 analysis. Later, and on the job, you would dig out the answers.

--Dare to disagree. As spelled out in your syllabus and discussed in class, you are encouraged to disagree within our established guidelines. That means if I assign you to write for a particular medium or audience and you think I'm wrong or you have a better idea, I will expect you to say so in your 1-10 analysis and cite logic and/or evidence in advocating alternatives. If handout or dictated information seems false or in violation of PR ethics, you must make the decisions to investigate it or discard it and be prepared to defend what you decide.

--Although it may be necessary for professionals to type secretarial-quality materials at times and although other classes may require you to type letter-perfect copy, use standard copyediting on both your 1-10 analyses and written products. Forget erasers and correction fluids and don't waste time in this class on trying to type letter-perfect. You may even clip and paste with rubber cement if a graph or two has to be rewritten. This, however, is not a license to turn in sloppy manuscripts. Corrections must be legible and clear. If the manuscript is so full of changes that a reader might be distracted, type another draft.

--I recommend at least two readings of your 1-10 and other copy, one for sense and the others to correct typos, spellos, grammar, syntax, and the like. You may find it helpful to use a ruler or other straight edge under the lines as you look for errors. Then, read it aloud and allow another sense to backstop that of sight. Finally, give it a last going over to assure that

everything, including corrections and editorial changes, reads well. Remember, a little polishing may make a big difference in the way employers, media gatekeepers, and targeted audiences receive your messages.

--Please ask me for help when your notes and the literature leave you overwhelmed, confused, or curious. And please share your ideas with your classmates. In this way, everybody benefits, particularly you.

Now, while they're fresh in your mind, begin to jot down questions and ideas.

SELECTED STUDENT NOTE EXCERPTS

"The 1-10 analysis is the best concept I have seen in any of my classes thus far (not just comm. classes either). . . . It gives the beginning student some criterion as we progress; it gives us a groundwork for organization. I'm going to save that handout forever!"

"(The analyses) lead to very organized, sequential thinking. They force the writer into an awareness of what to say and how to say it so that the reader will be most influenced."

"The greatest strength of this class is the amount of thought that needs to go into each assignment and class period. We are not being spoonfed information. We are learning to go out and find out information. We can more easily adapt to the future."

"I find the analysis system habit forming. I am not only applying it to PR writing, but also to personal and creative writing as well. It has been an excellent tool."

"Using (the 1-10) helped me to increase my analytical skills. Now before I sit down to work out a plan of action, I think exactly what I am trying to accomplish . . . . I am starting to internalize the analysis. I see this in my thinking process now."

"I have been able to use the 1-10 analysis on several projects I have been assigned at work (a professional PR position). It is versatile. I have used it before writing employee brochures and before producing slide shows. It has become a valuable tool to use when trying to justify something to top management."

"As I have already found through application of your system in other classes, this step improves organization 100%."

"In my experience working in PR offices, I have seen excellent writers spin out writing assignments. Often these writings were wasted because they were not targeted to an audience,

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not geared to any audience's expectations, not written as newsworthy copy for a particular communications medium, or not written for any apparent purpose to support the PR program."

"By having the 1-10 system, the writer is prepared to answer questions from supervisors, company presidents, and others that become involved in the gatekeeping process. The simple fact I found on my job is this: company leaders are so impressed with your logic and organization that they usually give you a free hand to proceed with your project."

"The 1-10 detailed objectives on every (assignment) are murder. . . .They are not very exciting to do but I do understand their importance."

"When I first started doing the 1-10 analysis, I really felt that this was just busy work, that it didn't have any real purpose because everybody 'knows' what they want to say and who they want to say it to. (But) by using this system continually, it has shown that it is indeed a valuable tool for public relations. . . . It allows you to be precise and to have specific targets to focus on. It's kind of like a road map."

"This will keep me from attacking problems indirectly. . . . These questions will keep me from sending out messages by the shotgun approach. . . and wasting time and money."

"Once upon a time, many, many weeks ago, the wise, old sage, Norm Nager, handed down his version of the 10 commandments. These commandments were met with groans of disbelief. Never before had students written so much in order to enter the promised land of successful public relations releases. But as time went on, apostles sprang up and began to spread the word and wisdom of Nager's commandments." (Old???)

BEWARE OF CHANGES

This version of the 1-10 analytical system differs in a number of respects from previous versions, as they did from the earlier 1-3, 1-5, and 1-9 systems. The current version incorporates valuable ideas proposed by past and present students. Your criticism, questions, and ideas will be most welcome.

# # #

OVERCOMING PITFALLS IN INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The teacher planning to use the 1-10 system,or her or his individualized adaptation of such a systemic, systematic approach to analysis and organization of PR writing, may wish to anticipate and plan around potential pitfalls.

First, students may need motivation to understand, as well as utilize, such an approach to writing. This may require carefully planned persuasive communication in the course syllabus, the introductory lecture, and programmed reinforcement through the term.

One way of doing this is to apply the 1-10 system, itself, to the teacher's objectives of influencing behavior of students during--and after--the course. Explaining such problems and objectives as covered in this paper and adapting these explanations to the levels of understanding and objectives of the students may prove beneficial. (Having students write their own objectives for the course and for their post-graduation careers, as well as selected demographic information, may help the teacher in her or his own 1-10 analysis.)

Confusion over terminology, let alone concepts, should be anticipated. It may be helpful to remind (or provide introductory training to help them understand) that meanings are in people, not words, in preparing them for "objectives," "media criteria," "audience characteristics" (a simplified term for framework of reference) and the like.

By the same token, it may be helpful to the teacher to initiate the teaching of the 1-10 system with refresher (or

orientation) discussions of the application of general systems theory and processual implications of communication to analysis and planning of public relations writing.

To help students appreciate values of the 1-10 system and grasp its principles in more personal and simplified ways, the author has used interpersonal in-class and individual discussions. Applying the 1-10 system to individual students, themselves, as "clients" with objectives of, say, persuading a spouse or friend to want to go out to dinner or a show seems to minimize confusion and antipathy of students who have trouble with the system and its components.

Some have difficulty in grasping the interdependent and systemic nature of the 10 questions. For such students, the advice to use separate sheets of paper for each of the 10 questions, forget the sequential numbers, and slip the pages into their typewriters to start them or add to them as ideas occur may be beneficial.

To walk students into the 1-10 system, the author has used such start of term assignments as:

--A modified analysis of stories in several different sections of a metropolitan daily newspaper. Students get to select their own stories and then answer the following questions: 1) probable PR client or clients, 2) probable primary objectives for wanting information in (or cooperating with reporters for) that section of the medium, 3) probable primary audiences the client may have wanted to reach and why, and 4) essence of the message that may have been conveyed to

the probable primary audiences. Students are advised that although their hunches may or may not relate to realities, such analysis of written materials (or audio-visual communications that may have been drafted by a PR person) helps them build the patterned approach while gaining insights into the media and their utilization of information.

--"Hometown" news releases, with their own university as the client, on a fellow student in the class. The instructor may initiate preliminary discussion of the assignment with the meanings of "hometown" and "news releases," terms which most students tend to take for granted. In such a way, they are encouraged to ask questions and not take for granted the meaning of what others say. Probing students, themselves, for the answers (and guiding them in the process), the instructor may recognize and call upon members of the class to propose probable overall objectives of a university, its PR objectives, and the objectives of writers in doing releases on students, to acquaint them with the objectives question, for instance. Based on such objectives and the information they're able to develop in interviewing each other, students are asked to do 1-10 analyses and press releases mated to them.

Students may need to be helped to understand how to ask and think of questions for an interview, let alone an examination of handout information or a 1-10 analysis. The instructor may not only walk through examples with the class and (as needed) the teacher coming up with questions, but also suggest such exercises as looking at stories in the media and second-guessing

questions that might have been raised by the PR writer, the journalist, the PR employer and medium gatekeepers and decision makers, and the ultimate audiences. (Texts and selected readings on interviewing techniques and strategies may be used later in the term.)

To give the students the benefits of practice in various types of PR writing and 1-10 system utilization and patterning, it seems to be necessary to give a number of assignments before students can grasp--let alone read or hear--all the principles and techniques one may hope to give them in the short span of a college term (or before one can introduce them to resources for programmed future growth as PR writers in the field). The author has found it of value to explain to students that development of mental capacities may be somewhat equivalent to development of physical strengths, that one has to exercise and stretch and build upon writing and analytical "muscles" in a similar way to developing one's muscles and skills for swimming or tennis. One cannot read a "how to" book and instantly become an expert athlete. Nor can one master a physical skill without investment of time and sweat. Students also may be told that the mental "pains" of analytical and polishing exercise may be equated to the hurting of muscles as they are taxed to new thresholds and that the exercising of the brain is as important to development of the writer as the exercising of the body is to the athlete (or the surgeon, or the musician).

As the teacher shifts gears and provides the first exercises with handout information and incomplete interpretative and detail

information students may desire to do the job, it may be worthwhile to commend the frustration some will express as they develop 1-10 analyses and go with what they've got. Students may need to understand that the feelings of frustration with inadequate data are signs of growth and creativity. In a sense, the instructor may equate the creative PR writing process with the development of pearls in oysters. It takes a bit of irritation from the sand to start a pearl. It takes a bit of irritation with the status quo to be creative and start new ideas in the writer's mind. As the student cited in the supplement to this paper complained, assignments may make "your mind stretch and your brain hurt, but you really learn something" in the process of stretching.

STRATEGIES IN IMPLEMENTATION BEYOND INITIAL STAGE

Just as mass communications may not be the panacea for the PR writer in all communications situations, so, too, may the patient instructor wish to structure one-to-one communication with individual students whose capabilities, experiential bases, frameworks of reference, and objectives prevent them from optimal benefits from printed materials and group discussions. Beyond the helpful notations that may be made in feedback on 1-10 components and the written products and the limited consultation opportunities in the classroom, one may find it advantageous to require at least one in-office critique session during the term and to use overhead and transparency projectors to individually and collectively teach students how to

constructively criticize their own analyses and writings.

Criticism of the work of others is one way journalists (through copyediting classes) learn how to criticize their own efforts. Such experiences may be provided students by having them turn in duplicates of assignments with their names removed (but student ID numbers included) and be assigned for grade credit to critique constructively, as well as copyedit and proof, the work of classmates (placing their own ID numbers on the assignments as critics).

Passing around the class (or using projectors to place them on the screen) better 1-10 analyses, as well as the products of the analyses, with devices and notes to call attention to strengths and weaknesses, may not only prove helpful as teaching devices but in giving recognition and, as the author learned, creating competition among the better students for recognition while providing peer models for other students.

To prevent students from doing the writing assignments and then rationalizing what they did with the 1-10 analyses, rather than using the system to help them develop more effective writing, one may assign the 1-10 paper by itself and selectively follow some 1-10 exercises with the stories or other writings. (Even students who do it backwards, however, will benefit to some degree, it may be suggested.)

At least one assignment may provide for students to have to use the same handout (or class interview of a guest speaker) for different purposes, media, and audiences, thus necessitating

students to recognize multiple potentialities of information they develop AND to operationalize at least two different modes of presentation of the same material.

Some end-of-term assignments may even allow the students to designate clients of their choice (past or current employer, the college or an institution or organization with which they are intimately familiar) so they may use or develop their own knowledge and feel a sense of identification with the client in doing analyses and such exercises as PR speeches, audio-visual presentations, or brochures.

One assignment that has proven popular with students and may be helpful in driving home the values of systematic analysis, planning, and polishing is to have them do a 1-10 with themselves as clients in producing "brochure" copy (a resume') and "direct mail" copy (cover letter) for purposes related to gaining job or internship interviews (equated with bringing customers into the showroom, for example). In such exercises, students are asked to give a brief introduction to the 1-10 paper explaining the client and overall objectives.

Students also may be given the opportunity to apply the 1-10 system to one of the most critical forms of public relations writing, the design of messages for written and/or oral presentation to employers who may need persuasion (rather than pleas or slogans) to give PR officers the authority, resources, cooperation or information they will need to execute the professional principles taught them and the high standards of ethics instilled in them during college.

TELEOLOGICAL WRITING FOR THE GOOD OF PR CLIENTS AND PUBLICS

In any type of public relations writing, be it press release, house organ story, ombudsman letter, memo to top management, video tape, speech, pamphlet, or proposal, the student learns the centrality of objectives.

The student learns that public relations writing is teleological writing that attempts to mate the objectives and needs of publics with the objectives and interests of clients or employers. The student learns that altruistic public relations objectives may be made possible by linking them to hard-nosed objectives related to the ends of the organization.

The student learns that public relations writing effectiveness means more than writing a press release that is printed, or even more than producing copy that pleases bosses and wins awards. The student learns that, ultimately, the test of effectiveness lies in the influencing of individuals within selected publics to behave or be pre-disposed to behave in ways that will be in the mutual interests of employers and audiences.

And the teacher may contribute not only to the professional prospects for the student but the upgrading of the profession by giving experience that goes beyond "how to" techniques to the creation of a new generation of PR communicators programmed for development as analytical, creative, persuasive, and objectives-oriented writers.

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